

Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7645

INFO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 1608

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR GR

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS US OPPOSITION TO COUP PLOTTERS

1. GREEK GOVTS ARREST OF 37 ACTIVE AND RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS FOR ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT IN PLOT TO OVERTHROW CIVILIAN GOVT IN GREECE CONTINUES TO BE SUBJECT OF WIDESPREAD COMMENT IN GREEK PRESS AND COFFEE-HOUSES. AS USUAL US ATTITUDE HAS BEEN SUBJECT OF MUCH SPECULATION, MOST OF IT ILL INFORMED AND SOME OF IT MALICIOUS. IN ORDER TO CLARIFY ATMOSPHERE AND TO LEAVE NO DOUBT ABOUT WHERE US STANDS, WE HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO MAKE OUR VIEWS KNOWN TO GREEK OFFICIALS AND OPINION LEADERS, REITERATING TO THEM THAT USG STRONGLY OPPOSES THREATS TO NEWLY-RESTORED PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN GREECE FROM WOULD BE PUTSCHISTS OF WHATEVER POLITICAL COLORATION.

2. ATHENS DAILY AKROPOLIS THIS MORNING PUBLISHES BRIEF FRONT PAGE ARTICLE, BASED ON CONVERSATION YESTERDAY EVENING BETWEEN OWNER-PUBLISHED ATHANASSIOS BOTSIS AND DCM WHICH REFLECTS TENOR OF WHAT WE HAVE BEEN SAYING IN SEVERAL INFLUENTIAL QUARTERS. TEXT READS AS FOLLOWS:

"AS WE ARE IN A POSITION TO KNOW, THE OFFICIAL AMERICAN POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE SUPPRESSED
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CONSPIRATORIAL ACTIVITY IS DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

(1) THE PROPOSED COUP IDS DENOUNCED IN THE STRONGEST MANNER; (2) US IS ABSOLUTELY OPPOSED TO ANY EXTRA LEGAL ACTIVITY FROM WHATEVER SOURCE; AND (3) AMERICA UNDERLINES THE NECESSITY FOR DEMOCRACY AND THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM TO BE STABILIZED IN GREECE AND IT PRAISED THE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION IN THIS REGARD OF PRIME MINISTER CONSTANTINE CARAMANLIS."

3. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THAT OUR CONTINUING EFFORTS TO MAKE US POSITION KNOWN AND UNDERSTOOD WILL BLUNT INEVITABLE ATTEMPTS BY GREEK LEFT TO IMPLICATE US IN RECENT EVENTS. SHOULD QUESTION ARISE AT DEPT'S NOON PRESS BRIEFING IT WOULD OF COURSE BE HELPFUL FOR DEPT SPOKESMAN TO UNDERLINE US OPPOSITION TO ANTI-DEMOCRATIC MOVES IN GREECE AND OUR STRONG AND CONTINUING SUPPORT OF THE DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVT OF CONSTANTINE CARAMANLIS.
KUBISCH

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